

Urban District of Ardsley.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

JOHN TOWNSLEY,

MEDICAL OFFICER,

FOR THE

Year ending December 31st, 1914.



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1915.



ANNUAL REPORT.

ARDSLEY,

February, 1915.

*To the Chairman and Members of the
Ardsley Urban District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have much pleasure in presenting the Annual Report for 1914, giving particulars of the vital statistics of the Township, together with the various conditions which affect such statistics, from which we are enabled to judge of the factors influencing the health of the inhabitants of Ardsley.

Vital Statistics.

The number of births registered during the year 1914 was 245, while the deaths occurring in Ardsley (including the Institutions therein) numbered 142.

In 1913 there were 240 births and 139 deaths.

Birth Rate.

Of the 245 births which occurred 126 were boys and 119 were girls: there were illegitimate—3 boys and 6 girls. The birth rate was 34·02 per 1,000 per annum, as compared with 33·70 per 1,000 in 1913.

The birth rate for England and Wales during 1914 was 23·8 (the lowest on record).

Death Rate.

The total number of deaths occurring in the Township was 142, of which number 34 were non-residents, leaving 108 as the number of deaths of residents. In the Kendray Hospital there were 30 deaths, only one of which was a resident

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of Ardsley. Three deaths were transferred to Ardsley, being residents who had died in Institutions outside the Township.

This leaves 108 as the number of nett deaths belonging to the district. Of the 108, 61 were males and 47 females, the death rate being 15·00 per 1,000 per annum.

The mortality returns, classified according to age, are as follows :—

Number of deaths under 1 year of age	...	38
" " from 1 to 2 years	...	15
" " 2 to 5 "	...	6
" " 5 to 15 "	...	12
" " 15 to 25 "	...	1
" " 25 to 45 "	...	7
" " 45 to 65 "	...	16
" " 65 and upwards	...	13
<hr/>		
TOTAL	...	<u>108</u>

From the above returns it will be observed that about 50 per cent. of the deaths were of children under 2 years of age.

As will be seen by the following Table, the factors influencing these early deaths are Premature Birth, Diarrhoea, and Pneumonia. This is largely accounted for by the fact than in a working-class population such as that of this Township, the mothers almost invariably perform their household duties up to the period of confinement, and as a natural result premature birth occurs.

As I have pointed out in previous Reports, the Diarrhoea diseases among children are due largely to the practice which obtains among mining communities of feeding young children with almost the same food as adults. Fish and chipped potatoes and newly baked bread enter into the occasional diet of young children. Such feeding gives rise to vomiting and purging, which frequently ends fatally.

The variable weather has the inevitable result of causing Bronchitis and Pneumonia, but a very considerable diminution in the mortality from these diseases might be attained if the practice of mothers taking out young children on wet and inclement nights was abated.

The scheme of the County Council, under which a Health Visitor has been appointed to this district, has not been working long enough to make any appreciable difference, the Nurse taking up duties as recently as September 14th. However, there is no doubt that in time such deeply rooted customs as are prevalent and are most injurious to the health of the baby will be eliminated, with the result that the Infantile Mortality will decrease considerably.

Advice as to the proper care of infants is given, and a pamphlet "How to take care of the Baby" (which clearly explains the necessity for regular and proper feeding) is left by the Health Visitor at each home visited.

From the 14th September to the 31st December 93 births were notified. 92 houses were visited and 114 re-visited.

Infantile Mortality.

			Under 12 months.		1 to 2 years.
Measles ...	...	...	2	...	—
Whooping Cough	...	...	3	...	1
Tuberculous Diseases	...	...	1	...	2
Meningitis	...	...	1	...	—
Bronchitis	...	...	1	...	1
Pneumonia	...	...	4	...	6
Diarrhoea	...	...	8	...	3
Congenital Debility and					
	Premature Birth		16	...	1
Convulsions	...	...	2	...	1
			—		—
			38		15
			==		==

The following Table shows the causation of death and rate of mortality at all ages :—

		No.	Death Rate per 1,000 per annum.
Measles	...	3	= 0·41
Whooping Cough	...	4	= 0·55
Diphtheria	...	1	= 0·13
Influenza	...	1	= 0·13
Phthisis	...	3	= 0·41
Tubercular Meningitis	...	5	= 0·69
Other Tubercular Diseases	...	3	= 0·41
Cancer	...	7	= 0·97
Rheumatic Fever	...	1	= 0·13
Meningitis	...	2	= 0·27
Organic Heart Disease	...	5	= 0·69
Bronchitis	...	6	= 0·82
Pneumonia	...	16	= 2·20
Other Respiratory Diseases	...	2	= 0·27
Diarrhoea and Enteritis...	...	11	= 1·52
Cirrhosis of the Liver	...	1	= 0·13
Bright's Disease	...	3	= 0·41
Puerperal Fever...	...	2	= 0·27
Other Diseases of Parturition	...	1	= 0·13
Premature Birth and Congenital Debility	...	16	= 2·20
Violent Deaths	...	4	= 0·55
*Other Defined Diseases...	...	4	= 0·55
Diseases ill-defined	...	7	= 0·97

* Due to Drowning.

Respiratory Diseases, especially Pneumonia, could be, to a large extent, warded off if bedroom windows were allowed to remain open so that the air of the bedroom could be purified and thus prevent the breathing of impure air, contaminated with the particular germ which causes the disease.

There were four inquests on residents during the year, the verdicts being as follows:—

- (1) Girl, aged 2 years, accidentally drowned whilst at play with a dog.
- (2) Boy, aged 11 years, accidentally drowned in attempting to save life.
- (3) Boy, aged 12 years, accidentally drowned in attempting to save life.
- (4) Boy, aged 11 years, accidentally drowned.

Zymotic, or Infectious Diseases.

Scarlet Fever.

This disease has been the most prevalent of the Zymotic Diseases during the year, twenty-one cases being notified, as against ten in 1913.

The first case occurred in February, in Waterfield Place. In March, five cases were reported, two being in one house in Conway Street.

There was no other case until July, when two occurred (in one house) in Ardsley, and one in Hoyle Mill.

Excepting one case in August, the months of August and September were free from this disease; but during October ten cases were notified, six being in Pindar Oaks Cottages (five in one house), two in Hoyle Mill, and one each in the Shepcote and Ardsley Wards.

All the cases were of a very mild character, no deaths ensuing.

Lack of knowledge as to the symptoms of the disease still prevails, with the result that children who have the disease are, in some cases, allowed during the initial stages to play with others, thus spreading the germs.

Diphtheria.

During the year there were fifteen cases of Diphtheria notified, this number being eleven less than in the year 1913.

In January, four cases occurred in the Shepcote Ward. During February and March, four cases (two in each month) were reported, whilst two cases occurred in Ardsley and one in Conway Street during April.

Two cases were notified in June.

The latter half of the year was almost free from this disease, only two cases being notified—one in October and the other in December.

Typhoid Fever.

Four cases of this disease were notified during the year, two in the Shepcote Ward (Grange Terrace and Hopewell Street) and two in the Ardsley Ward (New Street and Moxon's Square).

All the cases were removed to the Hospital, none ending fatally.

During 1913 there was no case of Typhoid to report, but in 1914 the disease was very prevalent in the country.

Whooping Cough.

In the month of May there was an extensive epidemic of Whooping Cough throughout the district. At the beginning of the month the attendance at the Hoyle Mill Infants' School suffered terribly, the percentage present being only 60. Shortly afterwards the Infants' Departments of the Stairfoot and Ardsley Schools were affected, almost to the same extent. I therefore advised the closure of these Schools for a month—ending after the Whitsuntide holidays. This course was adopted, and although in some cases the disease was very

severe, four only of the cases ended fatally, death following from Broncho-Pneumonia.

In all the cases visited the patients were requested to evaporate with cresol over a burner (a specific disinfectant for Whooping Cough), in both the living and the sleeping rooms, as this course helps to cut short the disease and prevents other children from contracting it.

Many parents look upon this complaint as one of the ailments which children must have, and consequently exercise little or no care in keeping the infected children excluded from others.

Measles and Mumps.

There were a few cases of Measles, though they were of a somewhat mild character.

Three deaths were caused by this disease.

There was a slight epidemic of Mumps at the same time as that of Whooping Cough, but it quickly disappeared.

Summer Diarrhoea.

An epidemic of Summer Diarrhoea, during the month of August, proved very fatal among babies, seven deaths resulting.

Here again, since the introduction of a District Nurse, we may expect a vast improvement, as the Health Visitor will give advice to mothers on the value of strict cleanliness in regard to food utensils, and the value of fresh milk feeding—above all, the mother's milk.

There were four cases of Erysipelas and two of Puerperal Fever notified, the two latter succumbing to the disease.

One case of Ophthalmia Neonatorum (the latest notifiable disease) occurred during the year. This disease is an inflammation of the eyes of newly-born infants.

**Pulmonary Tuberculosis and
“Other Tuberculosis.”**

During the year 14 cases of Tuberculosis were notified.
There were :—

- | | |
|---|--|
| 7 | cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis. |
| 2 | „ Tuberculosis of the Intestines. |
| 4 | „ „ Brain. |
| 1 | „ „ Abdominal Gland. |

The number of deaths resulting was six, as follows :—

- | | |
|---|--|
| 3 | from Pulmonary Tuberculosis
(ages 6, 19, and 46 years). |
| 2 | „ Tuberculosis of the Intestines. |
| 1 | „ „ Abdominal Gland. |

Two of the deaths due to Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified in 1913.

Water Supply.

The Township is supplied with water by the County Borough of Barnsley, which possesses two large reservoirs on the moors near Penistone. All houses receive water from this source, except the eight houses at Bleachcroft. These houses get their supply from a reservoir in an adjoining field. This water has been found, on analysis, to be quite good, and suitable for domestic purposes, but there is always the possibility of pollution by animals.

The water from the mains is very good in quality, being soft and having no solvent power on lead. The supply throughout the year has been constant in all parts of the district.

Milk Supply.

The important bearing of the milk supply on the health of the inhabitants, particularly the infants, need hardly be emphasised.

The number of cow keepers in the district is eight, with the approximate number of milch cows fifty-eight. The general condition of the cowsheds is good.

There are four persons who are purveyors only of milk, making the total number of registered milk sellers twelve.

Factory and Workshop Act, 1901.

The structures which come under this Act are very few in number, there being :—

- Two Glassworks.
- One Box Factory.
- One Joiner's Shop.
- One Plumber's Shop.
- One Bakehouse.
- One Dressmaker's Workroom.

The Glassworks are, of necessity, very well ventilated and lighted, while the sanitary arrangements for the workers are ample.

The Box Factory, which finds employment for a large number of young women, is well lighted and ventilated, and is also provided with efficient means of escape in case of fire.

There is separate sanitary accommodation for females.

The Joiner's and Plumber's Shops are well lighted and ventilated, and have sufficient means of egress in case of fire.

The Bakehouse is on the ground floor, does not connect directly with any drain or sewer, and has a water supply distinct from that supplying the W.C. It is well lighted and

ventilated, is well limewashed twice a year, and has a concrete floor. The Bakehouse does not communicate with any bedroom.

The Dressmaker's Room is occupied by the Dressmaker and two or three apprentices.

In conclusion, I should like to point out that the death rate—15·00 per 1,000 per annum—is (except for 1913, when it was 14·92 per 1,000) the lowest recorded for the last twelve years.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

J. TOWNSLEY,

Medical Officer of Health.